

## Petitioning with Your Feet

From local protests to massive marches in Washington, demonstrators have forced officials to confront issues that they have often wished to avoid. By any imaginable means, people have come before the government and demanded to be heard. Carrying signs, singing songs, and shouting from a podium, whether beautiful and moving or disrespectful and offensive, these demonstrations are an exercise in the American democratic process.



### The National Stage

Pro-immigration rally on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., April 2006

*Courtesy of Stephen Crowley/The New York Times/Redux*



**Student protest T-shirt**

Made during the Harvard University student anti-war protest and sit-in of the administration building, 1968–1969

*Gift of William Rutledge*

View object record [/collections/nmah\\_533369](/collections/nmah_533369)



**T-shirt, "Feminist and Proud"**

Obtained at the National Organization for Women (NOW) national convention, Detroit, Michigan, April 1977

*Gift of Linda New(wo)man*

View object record </collections/nmah\_496790>



T-shirt, "Justice for Janitors"

Produced for Service Employees International Union organizing campaign, and collected at the Democratic National Convention,

Atlanta, 1988

[View object record </collections/nmah\\_1051345>](#)





T-shirt, "Todos Somos Inmigrantes"

Worn during immigrants' rights demonstration, Chicago, May 1, 2006



Gift of Mireya Loza

[View object record </collections/nmah\\_1318903>](#)

## Protest Signs



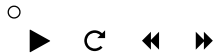
Piles of signs ready to be picked up by marchers for the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom

*Courtesy of Library of Congress*

This short video shows scenes from more than a century of political protests and demonstrations in the United States.



0:00 /  
3:18



Transcript

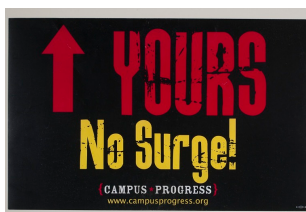
Vimeo (Privacy Policy <<https://vimeo.com/privacy>>, Terms of Service <<https://vimeo.com/terms>>)

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Poster, "We Want Work Not Welfare"

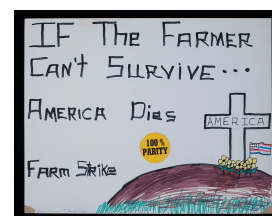
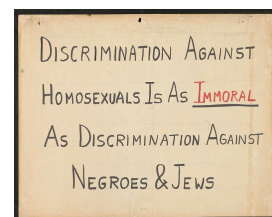
[View object record </collections/nmah\\_1460216>](#)





Poster, "Smash Imperialism"

[View object record </collections/nmah\\_1170367>](#)

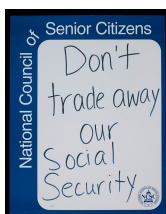






Poster, "Secure Our Borders Now!"

View object record </collections/nmah\_1384266>



#### Hours & Admission

Open every day, except December 25, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Admission is free and no tickets are required.

#### Location & Contact

1300 Constitution Ave NW,  
Washington, DC 20560 <<https://www.google.com/maps/place/smithsonian+national+museum+of+american+history/@38.8912835,-77.0322449,17z>>

Contact Information </about/contact>

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